

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An image input apparatus comprising:  
reading means for reading a manuscript image;  
and

communication means for performing a transfer  
of image data, which is read by the reading means, to  
another apparatus and a transfer of control data to the  
other apparatus, wherein

the communication means has a first mode in  
which a periodic data transfer can be assured, and a  
second mode in which the period data transfer cannot be  
assured, and transfers the image data and the control  
data in the first and second modes, respectively.

2. An image input apparatus comprising:  
reading means for reading a manuscript image;  
and

communication means for performing a transfer  
of image data read by the reading means to another  
apparatus, wherein

the communication means has a mode in which a  
periodic data transfer can be assured, and transfers  
the image data in the mode and transfers data other  
than the image data in a period in which there is no  
image data to be transferred.

3. An image input apparatus comprising:  
reading means for reading a manuscript image;  
and

communication means for transferring image

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data read by the reading means to another apparatus,  
wherein

the communication means has a mode in which a  
periodic data transfer can be assured, and

when the image data is transferred in the  
mode, the communication means transfers data other than  
the image data until the transfer of the image data is  
started.

4. An image input apparatus comprising:

supply means for successively feeding a  
plurality of manuscript sheets;

reading means for sequentially reading the  
plurality of manuscript sheets fed by the supply means;  
and

communication means for transferring image  
data of each of the plurality of manuscript sheets,  
which is read by the reading means, to another  
apparatus, wherein

the communication means has a transfer mode  
in which a periodic data transfer can be assured, and  
transfers status data in the transfer mode after  
transferring one-sheet image data in the transfer mode,  
the status data indicating a state of the image input  
apparatus.

5. An image input apparatus comprising:

supply means for successively feeding a  
plurality of manuscript sheets;

reading means for sequentially reading the

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plurality of manuscript sheets fed by the supply means;  
and

communication means for transferring image  
data of each of the plurality of manuscript sheets,  
which is read by the reading means, to another  
apparatus, wherein

the communication means has a transfer mode  
in which a periodic data transfer can be assured,  
transfers the image data of the plurality of manuscript  
sheets in the transfer mode, and transfers status data  
in the transfer mode in intervals between the image  
data of the plurality of manuscript sheets to be  
transferred, the status data indicating a state of the  
image input apparatus.

6. An image input apparatus according to claim  
4, wherein the status data indicates whether or not  
there is any manuscript sheet in the supply means.

7. An image input apparatus according to claim  
5, wherein the status data indicates whether or not  
there is any manuscript sheet in the supply means.

8. An image input apparatus comprising:  
reading means for reading a manuscript image;  
and

communication means for transferring image  
data, which is read by the reading means, to another  
apparatus, wherein

the communication means has a transfer mode  
in which a periodic data transfer can be assured,

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transfers the image data in the transfer mode, and transfers the same image data as the transferred image data in a free period of the transfer mode.

9. An image input apparatus comprising:  
reading means for reading a manuscript sheet;  
and

communication means for transferring image data, which is read by the reading means, to another apparatus, wherein

the communication means has a transfer mode in which a periodic data transfer can be assured, transfers the image data in the transfer mode, and successively transfers the same image data as the transferred image data in the transfer mode.

10. An image input apparatus according to claim 8, wherein the image data to be transferred is divided into predetermined units.

11. An image input apparatus according to claim 9, wherein the image data to be transferred is divided into predetermined units.

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